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Jeffrey A. Harley

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PRESIDENT'S FORUM



The Naval War College's Direct Role in Enhancing Readiness and Lethality

THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE'S educational and research efforts are focused clearly on maintaining a careful balance between learning the timeless lessons of the past and keeping a steady weather eye on trends that promise to shape the nature of future warfare. Over the past year, we have reoriented our course of study to prepare our students better to man and lead a Navy in which readiness is the key and lethality is the product.

- The College added three weeks of additional war fighting–focused studies, kicked off by a four-day Future Warfighting Symposium, which included lectures and discussions on topics such as emerging technologies, cyber warfare, and space operations.
- We continued to operationalize our educational and research efforts to optimize near-term support to the fleet. In particular, the College provided greater focus on understanding today's threats while further enhancing combat readiness through expanded teaching of maritime warfare. In his "Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority," the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) charged the Navy with testing and refining naval power concepts "through focused wargaming, modeling, and simulations" that will connect directly to fleet exercises and training. Implicit in this charge is the challenge that operations research and analysis across the Navy enterprise must be conducted in a cohesive or holistic manner that provides what the Navy's leadership needs to make fully informed decisions. We have answered this clarion call. The College has forged increasing connections among experimentation, campaign analysis, and war gaming. The College of Maritime Operational Warfare has provided focused courses, assist visits, and routine support to maritime

operations center / scenario-based exercises for Navy leaders at all ranks and grade levels.

- The Russia Maritime Studies Institute continued to expand and mature. This institute occupies a unique space at the nexus of the academic, policy, and operational communities, and the resident scholars study a wide variety of issues, including naval policy, strategy, and operations; maritime technologies; shipbuilding; maritime law; deterrence; and naval diplomacy.
- We expanded the maritime-centric portions of our curricula to anticipate and respond to changes in the strategic environment and to fulfill our mission of optimizing understanding of sea control. The courses offered by the College of Naval Warfare at the most senior level and in the College of Naval Command and Staff at the intermediate level are, first and foremost, about war fighting and gaining sea control in a contested environment. Both types are designed to challenge students intellectually in the theory and practice of war fighting and are geared toward war-fighting concepts that will prepare our future military leaders to fight the maritime force across all warfare domains. The capstone event for the 2016–17 academic year focused on the U.S. Pacific Command area of responsibility. Work being done by various other Naval War College activities—such as the Halsey Research Group, the China Maritime Studies Institute, and the Russia Maritime Studies Institute—has provided students with opportunities to deal with current capabilities and emerging issues.
- Although the College functions as a joint school, we have sprinkled an increasingly large dose of “salt water” on our research and gaming activities. In the past year the Navy Strategic Enterprise, through the vehicle of the Strategic Executive Group, has worked to provide more fleet input into the selection and prioritization of war games. A new vehicle for this sharing is the Wargaming Virtual Community of Practice, which is currently in development, with an initial operational capability scheduled for the closing months of 2017, on both the unclassified and classified networks. Our Center for Naval Warfare Studies (CNWS) has strengthened the faculty specifically in maritime-centric areas to address better such issues as future fleet design, the impact of a reinvigorated Russian navy, and the emergence of “gray-zone” warfare at sea.
- The College’s efforts to focus on the future war-fighting environment have driven us to conduct an ongoing reassessment of how best to prepare students for the strategic environment articulated in the CNO’s “Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority,” with its emphasis on contestation of the

maritime system, the rising influence of the global information system, and the increasing rate of technological change. With regard to the information domain, the College recently doubled the cyber content in its curricula. We have coordinated with the Naval Postgraduate School on a core cyber curriculum with overlap between the two institutions in four content areas: cyber concepts; international cyber law, ethics, and standards; military cyber operations; and cyber policy and strategy.

- Our talented CNWS researchers continued to support future thinking and analysis through work with the College's Center for Cyber Conflict Studies and the work of the Stockton Center for the Study of International Law in the area of cyber conflict.
- We established the Institute for Future Warfare Studies in February 2017 as a research-and-study department. It aims at understanding how armed conflict may evolve in the future and how the U.S. Navy can prepare for it better.
- The College strove to establish itself further as the locus of international maritime cooperation. Through a series of initiatives undertaken in this spirit, it has sought to promote ever-greater levels of cooperation and interoperability among the world's navies and coast guards.
- We increased the frequency of our regional alumni symposia from one to two annually. These symposia are international academic conferences premised on the belief that military education is not solely the product of a school-house but rather a lifelong attempt to acquire knowledge about the profession of arms.

The College is moving out smartly to execute a vision in which the institution is more supportive of the needs of the operating forces, more attentive to the unique challenges and opportunities represented by our naval heritage and our focus on flexible sea power as an instrument of national will, more cognizant and attuned to the impact that technological change will have on our maritime and joint forces, and more assiduous in our efforts to enhance maritime cooperation and friendship around the globe.

JEFFREY A. HARLEY

Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy

President, U.S. Naval War College